

Serial No.: 09/683,381
Attorney Docket No.: F-442

Patent

Amendment To The Claims

Please amend claims 1 - 8 as follows and add new claims 9-17:

04
[e1] 1. (currently amended) A system of ~~incoming mail receptacles~~ hazard detector systems for detecting hazards in a mail piece and notifying users including senders and recipients having quarantined mail comprising:

a plurality of detectors ~~incoming mail receptacles~~ each including a contaminant detection hazard detector for triggering a mail piece quarantine ~~system for the mailbox indication~~, an image scanner for scanning the face of a mail piece, a communications system, and a scan detection system for providing sender source and recipient information for quarantined mail pieces; and

a server connected to the plurality of ~~incoming mail receptacles~~ hazard detectors for receiving scan detection ~~data and data~~, determining a notification method and for communicating the notification to at least one of the sender and the recipient.

[e2] 2. (currently amended) The system of claim 1 further comprising:

a secure ~~internet~~ Internet connection between each ~~incoming mail receptacle~~ hazard detector system and the server

[e3] 3. (currently amended) A method for communicating a quarantine condition to users including senders and recipients of a mail system having a plurality of ~~incoming mail receptacles~~ hazard detector systems with hazard detection systems connected to a central server comprising:

detecting the presence of a mail piece;

detecting ~~sender~~ source information from the ~~the~~ [[a]] mail piece;

testing the mail piece for hazards to determine an initial mail piece quarantine condition;

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alerting the central server upon detection of a hazard and providing source information to the central server;
determining a notification method; and
notifying at least one user of the mail piece quarantine.

[e4] 4. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ method of claim 3 wherein the source detection includes detecting a destination address.

[e5] 5. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ method of claim 3 wherein the source detection includes detecting a return address.

A4 [e6] 6. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ method of claim 3 wherein the determination of a notification method comprises determining if a valid email address is available for the user.

[e7] 7. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ method of claim 3 wherein the determination of a notification method comprises determining if a valid telephone number is available for the user.

[e8] 8. (currently amended) The ~~system~~ method of claim 3 wherein the determination of a notification method comprises determining if the mail piece envelope address is a valid postal address for the user.

9. (New) A mail receiving system for detecting hazards in a mail piece and notifying users including senders and recipients having quarantined mail comprising:
a plurality of mailboxes each including a contaminant detection hazard detector for triggering a mail piece quarantine indication, an image scanner for scanning the face of a mail piece, a communications system, and a scan detection

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system for providing source and recipient information for quarantined mail pieces;
and

a server connected to the plurality of mailboxes for receiving scan detection data, determining a notification method and for communicating the notification to at least one of the sender and the recipient.

10. (New) A method for communicating a quarantine condition to users including senders and recipients of a mail system having at least one mailbox including hazard detection systems connected to a central server comprising:

detecting the presence of a mail piece in the mailbox;

detecting sender information from the mail piece;

testing the mail piece in the mailbox for hazards to determine an initial mail piece quarantine condition;

alerting the central server upon detection of a hazard and providing source information to the central server;

determining a notification method; and

notifying at least one user of the mail piece quarantine using the sender information.

11. (New) The method of claim 10 wherein the sender information includes detecting a destination address.

12. (New) The method of claim 10 wherein the sender information includes detecting a return address.

13. (New) The method of claim 10 wherein the sender information includes detecting a meter number.

14. (New) The method of claim 10 further comprising:

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storing a plurality of sender information records relating to a plurality of mail pieces placed in the at least one mailbox; and

if the initial mail piece quarantine condition is detected, notifying at least two users indicated by the plurality of sender information records.

015 15. (New) The method of claim 3 wherein the sender information comprises a meter number.

16. (New) The method of claim 3 wherein the recipient information comprises a scan.

17. (New) The method of claim 3 further comprising:
detecting destination information from the mail piece.
